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SUBJECT: FADHILA MEMBER ON PARTY'S ASPIRATIONS, CONCERN  
OVER SECTARIANISM.

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD FOR  
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Fadhila Party parliamentarian Basim Sherif Nsaif al-Hechaimi told PolOff in an April 24 meeting that Abd al-Raheem al-Hasuna will be the next Fadhila Party Secretary General. Al-Hechaimi predicted that al-Hasuna's appointment, along with the addition of former UIA 169 independent Ali al-Dabbagh and Jawad Bolani, will strengthen the Fadhila Party. Al-Hechaimi said that Fadhila hopes to retain control of the Ministry of Oil, and is interested in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of State for Youth and Sport. Al-Hechaimi expressed his concern that sectarianism will divide the next Iraqi government and prevent the various communities from cooperating. End Summary

¶2. (C) Fadhila Party CoR member Basim Sherif Nsaif al-Hechaimi told PolOff on April 24 that the Fadhila Party has decided to name Abd al-Raheem al-Hasuna to be the next Secretary General of the Fadhila Party. According to al-Hechaimi, Fadhila's spiritual leader Mohammad al-Yaqubi made the decision to appoint al-Hasuna Secretary General because he believed al-Hasuna will

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provide energetic leadership for the next four years. Al-Hechaimi said that al-Hasuna is perhaps 45 years old and is finishing his doctorate in History.

¶3. (C) Al-Hechaimi said that to further strengthen the Fadhila Party, Shia Islamist politicians Ali al-Dabbagh and Jawad Bolani had been invited to join. Al-Hechaimi said that al-Dabbagh and Bolani enjoy warm relations with Yaqubi and the larger Shia community. Al-Hechaimi said Fadhila hopes al-Dabbagh and Bolani will use their personal connections to Fadhila's advantage, strengthening the party's ties with other political groups. He said the Fadhila leadership thought this would help as the party tries to maintain control of the Ministry of Oil. Al-Hechaimi said Fadhila is also interested in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and the Ministry of State of Youth and Sport. He added that,

if called upon, Fadhila would be prepared to take the Ministry of Interior.

¶4. (C) Al-Hechaimi professed that Fadhila is a Shia Islamist party that nonetheless seeks a cross-sectarian government. He lamented that the next Iraqi government is likely to be just as driven by sectarian tensions as the previous one. "This will not be a national unity government," he said, "but simply a power-sharing arrangement among the political parties." Al-Hechaimi said that replacing Ibrahim al-Ja'fari with Nuri Kamal

al-Maliki as Prime Minister will not change the political situation as much as many people hope, because both men are from the Dawa Party and subscribe to the same ideology.

¶5. (C) Comment: The Fadhila leadership has been ambivalent about their place within the Shia Coalition. They tried to pull out of List 555 shortly after the coalition registration deadline for the December election. We will seek an early opportunity to meet with Al-Hasuna to gauge the direction he plans to go and to channel Fadhila's reported concerns about "sectarianism" towards support for a government of national unity with ministers selected based on their competence. Al-Hechaimi's reference to strengthening ties with other political groups seems to point in a positive direction. His assertion, however, that the party will seek to hold on to the Oil Ministry does not. End Comment.

¶6. (C) Bio Note: Al-Hechaimi studied medicine at Mosul University and graduated with a master's degree in microbiology in 1986. He was a professor at Baghdad University. He began his political career in the Kut city government during the CPA era. He serves in the Fadhila Party politburo. Al-Hechaimi speaks some English. End Bio Note  
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